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THE RED CROSS

BY

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The signing of the armistice brought a change to the Red Cross Bureau of Field Nursing Service, similar in nature to that of the military establishment. The papers of nurses desiring military service, which had been pouring into the Surgeon General's office from the Red Cross Department of Nursing at the rate of 100 a day, were suddenly stopped. Plans for an intensive drive to secure 1500 nurses' aides for overseas duty were immediately discontinued. The Department of Nursing, which had recruited and assigned to the military establishment over 21,000 graduate nurses, completely reversed its machinery, almost over night, and took up at once the equally difficult problems of readjustment and peace.

Within a few days of the armistice, cables from the Red Cross commissioners in France and Italy were received at National Headquarters, cancelling the sailing orders for all nurses awaiting debarkation. Nurses already in New York, some with an early sailing date in view, were allowed to proceed; others were obliged to return to their homes. Telegrams were sent to all nurses prepared for overseas service but awaiting actual traveling orders, advising them of the changes in the program, and similar telegrams were sent to nurses awaiting assignment to the military establishment. The Department of Nursing appreciates the inconvenience and, in many cases, the actual monetary loss which many of the nurses suffered, but the universal joy of the armistice was so much greater than individual inconvenience and disappointment, that the nurses accepted it with the usual equanimity and control which has characterized the profession during the war.

Before the order came, "Cease firing," various foreign units had been organized, or enlarged, with additional nursing personnel. The following units have been organized or reported upon since the last issue of the JOURNAL:

THE BALKAN UNIT.—In September, a Red Cross unit for the Balkan States sailed under the leadership of Henry W. Anderson, who headed the Unit for Roumania last year. This unit is expected to supervise and direct the work in all the other Balkan States, including Greece. Helen Scott Hay, who was preëminently fitted by her experience in Russia, Bulgaria, and at Red Cross National Headquarters for such service, was placed in charge of the nursing personnel of the

unit. Miss Hay took with her three nurses, Marietta Wilsey, Elizabeth Mitchell, Caroline E. Robinson; a dietitian, Constance Douglas; and a social worker, Mrs. Mary T. Moran.

"We have now arrived in Liverpool," writes Miss Hay, "after a very pleasant voyage and good weather. All of our fellow-passengers are Red Cross and 'Y' people and we have been a most congenial company, even though the influenza has made our nurses quite in demand."

In London, Rachel Torrance, who after the transfer of Miss Hall to Paris, had been acting as Chief Nurse of the Red Cross in Great Britain, joined the Balkan Unit.

In Paris, Miss Hay stopped long enough to visit the various Red Cross nursing activities in connection with the Children's Bureau and the tuberculosis hospitals. After a conference with Carrie M. Hall, who has succeeded Julia Stimson, now Chief Nurse of the American Expeditionary Forces, as Director of Red Cross Nursing Service in France, Miss Hay expects to attach twenty nurses released from service in France to the Balkan Unit.

RED CROSS NURSING SERVICE IN FRANCE.—At the signing of the armistice, there were 342 graduate nurses and 203 nurses' aides in service directly under the Red Cross in France. This nursing personnel was engaged in various forms of nursing activities, such as in tuberculosis sanatoria, with the Children's Bureau, and in obstetrical hospitals. A recent letter from Miss Hall states that forty-nine nurses have been sent into Germany to care for sick or wounded Americans in prison camps. A letter recently received from an escaped aviator bears interesting testimony to the work done by the Red Cross in this phase of war activity. The letter is from Lieutenant Charles Codman who, in company with James Norman Hall and three other American aviators, escaped from prison and arrived safely in Paris three days after the signing of the armistice.

I was brought down on September 16th, near Conflans with my rudder shot away, and the motor damaged. I got off with hardly a scratch, although my observer was quite badly wounded. Conditions both at Radstatt and Carlscube, Baden, are excellent. The work of the Red Cross here, both in the care of us well fellows, and of the wounded, is beyond praise. I had not been here for an hour before being equipped with everything, and I am perfectly honest when I say that my health has never been better.

The work of nurses' aides in France has been of particular interest during the last few months of the war. Under the Red Cross they have been used both for military and civilian purposes. An arrangement had been made whereby nurses in charge of American aides, speaking fluent French, have been assigned to the French military hospitals to which our troops were sent. Alice Fitzgerald,

originally assigned by a committee in Boston to the British as the Edith Cavell Memorial Nurse, has been supervising the work of these nurses and nurses' aides, and has under her direction 132 nurses and nurses' aides who have been sent into 101 of these French hospitals.

A Red Cross nurse, working in close connection with these interpreting aides, writes:

I am stationed now in a huge old chateau with a beautiful garden filled with trees that look as though they were a million years old, and crumbling age-yellowed statues. Sometimes when you pass the tent-wards near the garden, heads will come popping out, and they'll say: "Gee, are you real American girls?" "Say, anyone there from Missouri?" "Lookyhere, I can't raise up, but come on in and tell me if you're from California, won'tcher?"

Recent cables and letters indicate that the French now seem prepared to assume responsibility of many of the hospitals and other medical and nursing activities which have been so splendidly started by the Red Cross. The hospital at Evian, which has been established and maintained by the Red Cross since 1914, is soon to be turned over to the French, and we have recently been informed that on April 1st, the French will be ready to assume responsibility for the various medical and nursing activities in connection with the Children's Bureau, the tuberculosis hospitals, sanatoria, clinics and dispensaries.

SIBERIAN UNIT.—With the landing of troops at Vladivostock, the representative of the Red Cross in that country asked for nurses. A unit was under preparation, to be composed of nurses from Honolulu, two of whom, Fannie Kuhlig and Lillian Fitzgerald, sailed with other personnel. No others left as all orders were cancelled. Red Cross nurses have been sent there from China and Japan, however, among whom were Clara Sauer, Delia M. Battles and Rachel E. Farmer.

RUSSIAN UNIT.—From Alma Foerster and Beatrice Gosling, who went over to this country several months ago, the following cable has been received:

Archangel, Russia. Merry Christmas. Both well.

A cablegram has also been received from Major Charles T. Williams in charge of the Commission at Archangel, asking for ten nurses, but conditions became so dangerous that it was decided to discontinue the sending of additional personnel for the present.

PALESTINE UNIT.—Edith Madeira, Chief Nurse of the Red Cross Commission to Palestine, in a recent report, shows the vast field for all forms of nursing activities in the Holy Land.

We have had a wonderful opportunity for work here, and I shall never cease to be thankful that I was fortunate enough to be included. You will see from the report which is enclosed the nature of the work. On June 24 we took over the Government Hospital here, of 65 beds, mostly for fever patients. Disorder and filth were the principal difficulties, for every corner was packed full of rubbish

intermixed with a thin layer of useful things that had to be sorted out. Our next venture was to take over the tent hospital at Wadi Surar, where the refugees, driven from their homes near the firing line, as well as the Armenians, were concentrated. There were about 3500 there when we first saw it, all living in bell tents, sleeping, even the very sick, on the ground, as is their custom. Our first impression of Wadi Surar was of sand, and more sand, tents and more tents, but above, a wonderful view of the hills and a fine breeze which redeems the situation. Our hospital at Ramleh deserves description. It is a roof with a number of rooms scattered around the outer edge. These small rooms are used for patients, nurses, operating rooms, kitchen, laundry, and storage quarters—the whole being a most unique establishment. Apart from institutional work, there have been quite extensive public health activities among the deserted convents now crowded with refugees, the Carmelite Convent on the Mount of Olives, and the Franciscan Monastery on the way to Bethany, the Convent of the Holy Cross, the Russian Convent where the work is now being done by the Sisters themselves, and David's Tower, which is a mere ruin of the old building, but which shelters about 150 refugees, and is the cleanest place of any which we visit.

In addition to the personnel reported in a previous number, Miss Madeira has succeeded in attaching the following nurses to her Unit: Lillian C. Sewny, Beatrice Archer, Ruth Eddy, Sara Kaisermann. None of the above are as yet enrolled in the American Red Cross Nursing Service.

Dr. John H. Finley, head of the Palestine Commission, has recently returned to the United States, and has asked for twenty additional nurses to develop further various nursing activities in this country. As many nurses are expecting to be released from service in France, a cablegram has been sent to Miss Hall, asking her to select nurses desiring and qualifying for this service, in the near future. As Miss Delano and Dr. Finley both sailed for Europe on the *George Washington*, on January 3, it is expected that Miss Delano will assist in organizing this additional unit upon her arrival in Paris.

ITALIAN UNIT.—Red Cross nursing activities in Italy have been very extensive during the past few months, in educational, tuberculosis and public health nursing, as well as in the military service rendered by Red Cross nurses now attached to the Army Nurse Corps of the American Expeditionary Forces. Teaching centers where Italian women and girls are given instruction in home nursing and care of infants and children have been established under the Red Cross. An Italian Tuberculosis Unit of thirteen Red Cross public health nurses, has been in Italy since September, 1918. The nursing personnel of this unit is composed of the members under the leadership of Mary S. Gardner, Director of the Red Cross Bureau of Public Health Nursing, Mary T. McCarthy, Ida P. Kamerer, Elnora E. Thomson, Isabelle R. Hall, Annie R. McCauley, Ethel Nichols, Mary T. Davis, Mary L. Reed, Lucy E. Ramstead, Mary G. Fraser, Marie F. Cantania, Carolina A. Weaver.

From one of the 100 nurses now attached to the Army Nurse Corps serving with Base Hospital No. 102, in Italy, a unit organized by the Red Cross, comes the following letter:

Quartered in an old palace where Sir Walter Scott would have loved to put his heroines, we are the nearest nurses to the Italian front. I think you would be most interested in our living conditions for our palace-hotel has great heavy doors with iron gratings, and a courtyard paved with cobblestones, and rose and wisteria vines which have climbed to the top of the high grey walls. Under broad overhanging eaves, hundreds of doves circle and make their homes, and in the tower there is a long winding stair and tiny rooms where the sunlight never falls. My room has a small casement window, through which the Great Bear peers at night, with the smile of an old familiar friend. Aeroplanes circle low over my head, and from the stone terrace I look across to snow-covered mountains where the smoke of battle hangs like a cloud, and listen to the roar of the guns which is like thunder in a far off storm. Even though we are so near the front, we have many of the comforts, both of the ancients and the moderns. The tomb of Romeo and Juliet is near enough for us to make pious pilgrimages to it, in memory of our own lost loves! We have moonlight nights that Shakespeare conceived, and Browning loved to describe, but which are at present very much out of favor with the Italian aviators. We also have electric lights, a shower, and an abundance of cold water. There is no lack of recreation, either, for along with the Y. M. C. A. movies and music by the regimental bands in the neighborhood, Fritzie rarely forgets us. It is very thrilling to be awakened in the middle of the night, and to have to run for your life down the slippery marble stairs in the dark. On the way, I invariably wonder which would be the worse—to be blown up or to die of a broken neck. The spirit of the people of Italy is inspiring. In the faces of the old men, the women and children,who kneel in great devotion in the churches, is the look of the early Christian martyrs—patient, uncomplaining, resigned. Italy of to-day is worthy of her glorious past. Since coming here, I have understood why great souls of other countries have loved her and lived and died for her, not only because of her beauty and old-world charm, but because of her heroic soul, and I read with deeper meaning,

"Open my heart and thou shalt see
Graven inside of it Italy,
Such lovers old are I and she!"

Here as everywhere, the hardest work of the Red Cross will come with peace. If we are allowed to help, the work along public health lines will be tremendous, as the need here is appalling. At present, I am wading through the drudgery of Italian verbs, hoping I may find something to do later on, but even if we are not, I am glad I came, I would not have missed it for anything! I will be a thousand times better public health nurse at home, broadened in vision and deepened in sympathy. Since I have to do all my washing, I will incidentally be greatly inproved when it comes to sanitary inspection of washerwomen, for I will bring into this work not only theories now, but a vast practical working knowledge!

Although recent communications from the Italian representative of the Department of Nursing state that the government has suggested to the Red Cross that a national organization of nurses be established, and that training schools for nurses be organized in con-

nection with the Italian hospitals, at present we cannot state how extensive the field for American nurses in Italy will be.

AMERICAN RED CROSS BUREAU OF INFORMATION

The organization of the Red Cross Bureau of Information at 44 East 23rd Street, in New York City, is now well under way. Letters to superintendents of hospitals and training schools, sent out by the Department of Nursing, are already bringing back hundreds of responses calling attention to vacancies existing in such institutions. A similar letter is being sent out to public health organizations of all kinds, and will probably bring in a similar response. The Student Nurse Enrollment of the Committee of Nursing of the Council of National Defense is also to be moved to this office, together with the excess enrollment of the Army School of Nursing. The Red Cross is most desirous that all nurses, soon to be released from military service turn to this Bureau for information, either directly, or through the Director of Nursing in the various Red Cross Divisions. It is hoped that representatives of the three national organizations of nursing will soon be placed in this office, in order that all applicants may have the best possible advice upon nursing activities, if such services are desired.

Agnes G. Deans, who is to make a tour of inspection to the various Red Cross Division offices of nursing, has been detained to organize an adequate filing system in this office, where all information relating to the opportunities in institutional, public health, and other nursing activities may be kept.

RANK FOR NURSES

Nurses will be interested to hear that a National Committee on Rank for Nurses has been organized, with William H. Taft as honorary member and with Mrs. Philip Schuyler Doane as temporary chairman. The committee consists of a large number of interested and broad-minded citizens, both men and women, as well as the Chairman of the National Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service, the presidents of the three national organizations of nurses, and others. A meeting of this committee is to be held in New York during the week of January twelfth, at the same time as the meetings of the Boards of Directors of the national organizations of nursing.

CARE OF NURSES TAKEN BY THE ENEMY

Although we hope that the word "enemy" will soon be relegated to the background, with other war terms, nurses in service will be interested to know that Comptroller Warwick has reversed his decision that members of the Army Nurse Corps who have been taken

prisoner by the Germans, were not entitled to salary. The decision, as first rendered by the Comptroller, at a time when the Surgeon General was calling for thousands of nurses for the military establishment, dealt a serious blow to enrollment. The Red Cross announced immediately that it would provide all nurses who were captured by the enemy, with food, clothing and, if necessary, money for living expenses. It is now a matter of congratulation that the armistice was signed before the Red Cross was called upon to perform this unhappy function.

UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH HOSPITALS

During the past months, the Red Cross has supplied at the request of Surgeon General Blue, nurses for Marine and other hospitals under the auspices of the United States Public Health Service. For some time it has seemed desirable that some one inspect these hospitals, and make a study of the needs of the nurses in service and the conditions existing there. At the request of Surgeon General Blue the Department of Nursing has appointed Lucy Minnigerode for such work. Miss Minnigerode took up her duties in December, 1918, and has already visited one hospital.

The hospital at Nitro, West Virginia, to which the Red Cross has sent approximately 100 nurses, has now decreased its staff to fifteen. It is not yet known what the future of this work will be.

THE INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC

Word has come from nearly all the Divisions advising us of the recurrence of the influenza, but with the lessons which have been learned in organization from the previous epidemic, each Division has been well able to take care of its own problems.

During the recent recurrent wave of influenza in Washington, D. C., an interesting form of nursing service has been developed with considerable success. As the majority of cases were in the homes of families able to employ private nurses rather than in the homes of the less fortunate classes, coöperation between the United States or the local Public Health Service, the Visiting Nurse Association, and the Red Cross was effected in such a way that hourly nursing was made to cover almost all the calls. Nurses were mobilized from Nitro, West Virginia, and Muscle Shoals, Ala., where the epidemic is abating, and assigned to the local Visiting Nurse Association, to whom all calls were referred. A nurse was then sent out to investigate all calls, and determine the nursing needs, and in this way great conservation of nursing resources was effected, as well as eliminating to a large extent "luxury nursing." The emergency hospital was re-opened, however, for patients in need of institutional care, but at the present writ-

ing, the epidemic seems well under control. A convalescent home is also being organized for war-workers, and Ida Butler, of Hartford, Conn., recently returned from France, has been appointed as superintendent.

SERVICE INSIGNIA

The War Council has recently issued instructions that Red Cross nurses may wear upon the sleeve of the regulation outdoor uniform the silver Red Cross Service Stripe. The following regulations concerning its use have been adopted by the Special Committee of the War Council: A silver braid stripe, one and one-half inches long by one-fourth inch wide, for each six months of continuous service should be worn on the left sleeve of the coat, midway between the wrist and elbow and parallel to the arm. When more than one stripe is worn, the stripes shall be set one-fourth inch apart. No service stripe shall be worn for less than six months of continuous service. In determining the period of service, the beginning of the period shall in no case antedate April 6, 1917, the date of the entrance of the United States into the European war. The period of service need not be confined to one class of work, provided the service was for a continuous period. Authority to wear the service stripe must be obtained through the Department of Nursing. The question of service badges and medals for nurses is now under consideration. It is expected, however, that the service of the nurses will be recognized by some special insignia appropriate to their profession. After the declaration of peace, the Florence Nightingale Medal will be awarded by the International Committee of the Red Cross to those nurses who have rendered singularly distinguished service during the war.

REDUCTION OF NURSING FORCES

The signing of the armistice, necessitating a consequent decrease in the size of the Army Nurse Corps in the near future, has brought an avalanche of questions to National Headquarters. While it is too soon for the Surgeon General's office to give definite information on these points, it is quite safe to say that a large number of nurses will probably be released within the next few months. If a larger standing army is to be authorized than has been previously maintained before our entry into the war, a larger regular nurse corps will probably be required than has formerly been the case. An opportunity will no doubt be given some of the Reserve nurses to transfer to the Regular Nurse Corps. One of the most frequent inquiries is whether a nurse transferring from the reserve to the regular, must resign from the Red Cross Nursing Service. This is not required. Many of the nurses in the regular corps are also

members of the Red Cross Nursing Service and we encourage such a double membership. The Superintendent of the Army Nurse Corps is, herself, a member of the National Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service. We should like to emphasize the great importance of nurses reading most carefully the instructions which are posted in the military hospitals. We find that much misunderstanding, not to mention the many letters that find their way to Red Cross Headquarters, results from a casual or a hurried perusal of such notices. We have been advised by the Surgeon General's office of a change in the order directing that all members of the Army Nurse Corps purchase the outdoor uniform within three months. This order has been revoked, but as the use of the outdoor uniform is encouraged, all nurses who desire to purchase this, may do so. Readers of the JOURNAL may already have heard that the Army allows its released nurses to wear the uniform with insignia and buttons for a period of three months. The Red Cross is allowing a similar privilege to nurses who have been serving directly under its auspices overseas. At the conclusion of three months, nurses should remove all Red Cross insignia, although as a matter of economy, due to war shortage of materials, they may continue to wear the suit if they so desire. Following this notice, the Red Cross has decided to close its Division of Equipment as rapidly as possible, and after a few weeks, it will no longer be able to take charge of nurses' orders for uniforms and other equipment.

RED CROSS CAPES.—One of the most frequent inquiries received at Red Cross Headquarters concerns the much-loved, scarlet-lined cape. Offers to purchase this cape, so that it may be retained after release from service, are received in large numbers daily, and it is a source of genuine regret that the Red Cross is unable to comply with these requests. This cape has always been accepted as the outward evidence of active duty, and for this reason has a definite sentimental and traditional value. Should the approximate 24,000 nurses now in military duty be allowed to retain this cape after being mustered out of active service, to be worn on any and every occasion, this would soon destroy the sentiment which the cape now possesses. Our attention is frequently called to the misuse of the cape even when nurses are in active service. We hear of its being worn by persons who are not members of the nursing profession; that it is worn with civilian clothes; that it is often left about, lost through carelessness, or stolen, to become the property of some one who may bring great discredit to it. We feel sure that with this understanding of the point, the nurses will see the reasonableness of the resolution passed by the War Council, after endorsement by the National Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service, that nurses be allowed to keep all equipment, when mustered

out of service, except Red Cross capes, steamer rugs, blankets, sleeping-bags, or any unused material which might be utilized for some other phase of Red Cross activities.

NURSING SURVEY

The Department of Nursing of the American Red Cross, through its special Bureau of Nursing Survey, is preparing to report to the United States Government the number and location of all nurses in this country, in insular possessions, and in China and Japan, whether in civilian, Army, Navy, or United States Public Health service.

The Survey was undertaken at the request of the Department of War and of the Navy. That there may be no misunderstanding, it seems advisable to outline again the purposes which prompted this work. Originally, it was intended to gather information concerning the nursing resources of the nation, in order that large numbers of nurses could be recruited through the Red Cross for military service without detrimental effect to the civilian communities from which they were withdrawn. At the beginning of the undertaking, the results of previous surveys were examined. In order to secure a uniform report, however, it was found necessary to ask all nurses to fill out the questionnaires, although some of the ground had previously been canvassed by other organizations, and although many nurses were already enrolled in the Red Cross Nursing Service.

Even though the armistice has been signed, the great necessity of the Survey continues. Its results will promote nursing interests in general, lay the foundation for a campaign of nation-wide education in the social value of the nursing profession, and will make available accurate information concerning the number of graduate nurses and others with some nursing knowledge, such as practical nurses and nurses' aids. It will also reveal the localities where the supply is inadequate or where the nursing resources are not being used to the best advantage. The value of the Survey was never more conclusively proved than in the epidemic of influenza, when the Survey, incomplete as it was, revealed nursing resources in communities which had thought themselves entirely without such nursing personnel.

In conclusion, we urge that the nurses of the country, graduates and pupils as well, fill out the questionnaires and forward them as promptly as possible to their Division Directors of Nursing Survey, in order that the Red Cross may be prepared to perform in peace that humanitarian service for which it was established.